GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4939
ANSWERED ON:24.08.2001
REJECTION OF WHEAT BY IRAQ
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Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government have asked the STC for a detailed report on the rejectionof two-shiploads of wheat exported to Iraq by private Indian companies;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the steps being taken to see that the private companies do not resort to such actions;

(d) whether any guidelines in this regard have been issued by the Union Government; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI CHAUHAN)

(a)&(b): An official delegation visited Iraq to find out the cause of rejection of four consignments of wheat sent by three private parties. CMD, STC was one of the members of thedelegation. The delegation found that the Indian wheat was not substandard and conformed to the CODEX Standard. As per the International CODEX standards, foreign matter in the grain is permissible upto 2% out of which 1.5% consists of organic matter, such as chaff, weed seeds, other edible and inedible grains, etc. and the balance 0.5% inorganic foreign matter, such as stones, sand dust etc. Quality specification prescribed in the Iraqi contract provided for the presence of foreign matter upto 2%. There was no further break-up of this 2% into organic and inorganic foreign matter. The Indian delegation that visited Iraq was, however, informed by Iraqi authorities that, according to their definition, they do not count sand particles under foreign matter. In other words, inorganic matter, which is a part and parcel of foreign matter like sand, stones, pebbles, clay particles etc. are not accepted under this category.

The explanation given by them was that only organic foreign matter (like chaff, glumes, weed seeds and other edible and inedible grains) are taken under this category. The exporters did not know this position. They presumed that as in the CODEX standards, the 2% foreign matter would include upto 0.5% inorganic matter. The delegation was further informed that the Iraqi flour mills were not having adequate facilities for separation of inorganic matter because of the problem of spare parts required for maintenance of such machines owing to UN sanctions. The delegation was further informed that Iraq had also rejected the wheat sourced from various other countries on the same grounds. As the consignment conformed to the CODEX standard, it was accepted in Dubai.

(c),(d)&(e): On receipt of reports of rejection of wheat consignments from India, FCI hasbeen directed to ensure that no further consignment of wheat is sent to Iraq, unless it has been cleaned to meet the specifications of the Grain Board of Iraq.FCI has also been directed to set up cleaning facilities at Kandla Port or any other port from which exports take place.